

# EARN MARYLAND IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

## **Grantee Guide**

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July 16, 2014

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**Note: This Guide is intended to provide more detailed assistance in complying with Grant requirements and does not supersede any provisions of Grantee’s Grant Agreement.**

## SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

The EARN Maryland Program was created by the O'Malley – Brown Administration and the Maryland General Assembly in 2013 to create industry-led Partnerships to advance the skills of the State's workforce, grow the State's economy and increase sustainable employment for working families. It is a competitive workforce and economic development Grant Program that is both industry-led and regional in focus. It is flexible and innovative, designed to ensure that Maryland employers have the talent they need to compete and grow while providing targeted education and skills training to Maryland workers. This includes both career advancement strategies for incumbent workers and support for individuals with specific barriers to employment.

The EARN Maryland Program is designed to fulfill the following goals:

- Address business workforce needs by focusing on industry sector strategies that seek long-term solutions to sustained skills gaps and personnel shortages.
- Address the needs of workers by creating formal career paths to good jobs, and sustaining or growing middle class jobs.
- Encourage mobility for Maryland's most hard-to-serve jobseekers through targeted job readiness training.
- Foster better coordination among the public and private sectors and workforce, economic development, and education partners around the State.

## SECTION 2: EARN MARYLAND CONTACT INFORMATION

Role	Name	Email
Program Director	Elisabeth Sachs	elisabeth.sachs@maryland.gov
Grant Advisor	Amy Fusting	amy.fusting@maryland.gov
Grant Advisor	Greg Montross	greg.montross@maryland.gov
Grant Advisor	Cindy Paradies	cindy.paradies@maryland.gov
Grant Advisor	Mary Klase	maryc.klase@maryland.gov
Grant Fiscal Specialist	Deborah Wesley	deborah.wesley1@maryland.gov

## SECTION 3: PROJECT SCHEDULE

The **EARN Maryland Project Schedule** is a programmatic and fiscal blueprint of the Grantee's overall Project. It is a consolidated outline of all projected activities and expenditures. This Project Schedule will allow both DLLR and the Grantee to track the progress of implementation and anticipate quarterly expenditures for each Partnership.

Each Grantee is required to complete the Project Schedule with the assistance of your EARN Maryland Grant Advisor. The Project Schedule Form and related guidance are provided at Appendices A and B.

## SECTION 4: DISBURSEMENT GUIDELINES

### Timing:

EARN Maryland Grant disbursements will be made quarterly, during the quarters beginning October 1, January 1, April 1 and July 1 of each State fiscal year.

### Process:

The process for quarterly disbursement of EARN Maryland funds is as follows:

- **By the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month beginning each Quarter** ("the Required Date") (see chart in Section 5), Grantees will submit:
  - **Request for Payment Form**
  - The following Reports (collectively "**Quarterly Reports**"):
    - **Quarterly Expenditure Report** (Section 6),
    - **Quarterly Narrative Report** (Section 7), and
    - **Quarterly Outcome Report** (Section 8)

Forms are provided at Appendices C through F.

- The Request for Payment Form should reconcile with the Project Schedule's Current Quarter Expenditure Projections (Column P) and the Quarterly Expenditure Report.
- Grantees must submit Quarterly Reports by the Required Date for each quarter even if a Request for Payment is not made for that particular quarter.
- DLLR will review and reconcile all Requests for Payment against the Project Schedule and the Quarterly Reports.
- Approval for Grantee's current quarter's disbursement will be determined based upon the extent to which Grantee's Project Activities are meeting its Project Schedule, Budget, Deliverables and Outcomes.

- Assuming timely submission of all Quarterly Reports, the projected timeframe for receiving the Quarterly EARN Disbursement is between 6 and 8 weeks. If an EARN Maryland disbursement check (or direct deposit, where applicable) has not been received during this timeframe, Grantees should contact their Grant Advisor.

**Submission:**

- The Request for Payment Form must be submitted to DLLR in hard copy, with an original signature from Grantee's Authorized Fiscal Agent.
- Unless otherwise specified, Grantees will submit the Quarterly Reports via email to their assigned EARN Maryland Grant Advisor.

**Final Request for Payment:**

- The final Request for Payment must be submitted to DLLR no later than April 15, 2016.
- The final Request for Payment must include all final Grant expenses, including all Sub-Grantee expenses.

Grantees are strongly encouraged to review their budget to identify any anticipated balance of funds and review this with their EARN Maryland Grant Advisor at least 30 days before submittal of the final Request for Payment on April 15, 2016. Actual expenses per line item must be within 19% of the budget for that line item. Budget to actual expense changes of 20% or more require a Project Modification (Section 13). Expenses that are not billed in accordance with the Approved Project Budget will not be reimbursed.

## SECTION 5: DATES FOR QUARTERLY REQUESTS FOR PAYMENTS AND PRIOR QUARTER REPORTING

Reporting Period	Requests for Payment and Quarterly Reports Due
Start of Grant Period (6/1/2014 or 7/1/2014) - 9/30/14	10/15/14
10/1/14 - 12/31/14	1/15/15
1/1/15 - 3/31/15	4/15/15
4/1/15 - 6/30/15	7/15/15
7/1/15 - 9/30/15	10/15/15
10/1/15 - 12/31/15	1/15/16
1/1/16 - 3/31/16	4/15/16 (Final Request for Payment Due)
Start of Grant Period (6/1/2014 or 7/1/2014) – End of Grant Period (6/30/16)	By 8/15/16 (Final Reports)

## SECTION 6: QUARTERLY EXPENDITURE REPORT

Each quarter, Grantees are required to submit a Quarterly Expenditure Report by the Required Date (Section 5), using the form at Appendix D.

All actual expenses and leveraged resource contributions reported on the Quarterly Expenditure Report must be supported with documentation. This documentation must be maintained by Grantees and must be available for review by DLLR or its designees. In addition, DLLR may periodically request copies of specific documentation. All expenses and leveraged resource contributions must be incurred during the Grantee's "Grant Period" as detailed in Grantee's Grant Agreement.

An attached Chart of Required Documentation for Expenses and Leveraged Resources (Appendix D, part 2) lists the types of documentation acceptable for each category of expense and leveraged resources. In some instances, substitute invoice or leveraged resource documentation may be negotiated with Grantee's Grant Advisor prior to submitting the first Quarterly Expenditure Report. A Quarterly Leveraged Resources Tracking form will be issued by September, 2014.

### End of Fiscal Year Reporting:

- DLLR will advise Grantees about requirements for End of Year Fiscal Reporting by April 1, 2015.

## SECTION 7: QUARTERLY NARRATIVE REPORT

Grantees are required to submit Quarterly Narrative Reports by the Required Date for each quarter (Section 5), using the Form provided at Appendix E. This Report will assist DLLR in tracking the progress of all Project Activities and aid EARN staff in identifying potential problems where technical assistance may be needed. Additionally, the Narrative Report will highlight success stories (Section 16).

In addition to submitting Quarterly Narrative Reports, Grantees are encouraged to share Partnership meeting agendas, minutes and other tools and resources with their EARN Maryland Grant Advisor.

## SECTION 8: QUARTERLY OUTCOME REPORT

Grantees will be expected to report participant demographic information and outcomes, including enrollments, training activity, job placements and wages as requested in the Quarterly Outcome Report at Appendix F. Grantees should ensure that data through the end of each quarter are complete and accurate at the time that Quarterly Reports are submitted.

### **Participant Data:**

Upon enrollment in an EARN Maryland funded training activity, Grantees must obtain and record the following data from each Training Participant:

1. Age
2. Race
3. Employment Status (upon enrollment)
4. Previous Wage Status (annual or hourly)
5. Residence by zip code and county
6. Level of Education

Grantees must assign an Identification Number to each Training Participant in the following format:

- [Grantee's Grant Award #]-[Sequential numbering for each Participant]

For example, the first enrollee in the Partnership with Grant Award # IG0514-42 will be identified as Participant # IG0514-42-001, the second enrollee will be # IG0514-42-002, and so on.

By using this process, DLLR will be able to track the outcomes pertinent to each Participant without receiving any personally identifiable information, thus protecting the data security of the Grantee, Partners, and Participants. However, Grantees must maintain an internal record of each Participant's identifying information, which may be examined in an audit, or to confirm the veracity of the information reported in Quarterly Reports.

## SECTION 9: INFORMATION SECURITY

It is the policy of the State of Maryland to safeguard the security, confidentiality, and integrity of personal information and personal data of the general public. This includes information and data that is handled, collected, used, stored, processed, disposed, or disseminated in the process of providing services.

As an EARN Maryland Grant recipient, Grantees will necessarily be collecting Personal Information (PI) from individuals enrolled in training as well as other potentially confidential information from Partners. It is expected that Grantees will regard electronic data and other manually maintained records on individual persons, employers, and others as confidential in nature, to be held in trust, and will protect and cause to be protected such data against unauthorized disclosure and/or use. These data may include, but are not limited to, name, address, social security number, telephone number, age, sex, ethnic background, wage, employment, tax information, user name, logon identification numbers, password, or any other information gathered either from individuals or from other Partners that is personal or confidential in nature.

EARN Maryland Grantees are expected to ensure that they:

- Collect quantity of personal information and data reasonably needed to accomplish legitimate purpose
- Securely store and protect personal information and data against unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, disclosure and loss
- Disclose personal information and data only on a need to know basis
- Protect the security of social security numbers and dispose of any documents containing them in an appropriate and secure manner
- Destroy personal information and data as soon as it is no longer needed or required to be maintained under state or federal law
- Address administrative, technical, and physical safeguards

If you become aware of any event that involves unauthorized disclosure or destruction of personal or confidential information, you are required to notify your Grant Advisor and take further steps to avoid an additional breach of security.



## SECTION 10: PROGRAM EVALUATION

DLLR is partnering with Salisbury University's Business, Economic, and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) on outcome tracking, customized "return on investment" and key performance measures, and overall evaluation of the EARN Maryland Program.

BEACON will be working with each Grantee to develop customized measures and assist with benchmarking implementation progress based on the Project Schedule. ***Additional tools and technical assistance will be provided as part of this process.*** Monthly updates to the outcome tracking form as well as site visits by BEACON staff during the grant period are anticipated.

Additional guidance on this aspect of the EARN Maryland program will be provided at regional meetings with Grantees in September 2014.

## SECTION 11: GRANT CLOSEOUT

As stipulated in the EARN Maryland Implementation Grant Agreement, within forty-five (45) days after the Grantee completes the Project, or the end of the Grant Period (June 30, 2016), whichever is earlier, Grantee shall submit to the Department:

1. The final quarter's required Quarterly Reports covering the last quarter of activity.
2. **A Final Narrative Report.**

The Final Narrative Report will include:

- a narrative summary of the effectiveness of funded training;
- related Partnership activities;
- any problems encountered in completing the Project;
- quantitative outcomes;
- comparison of projected outcomes to actual Program impact and, where applicable, a rationale for the failure to meet any projected goals;
- Final Expenditure Report certified by the highest fiscal officer of Grantee, that lists all expenditures relating to the Grant, including expenditure of Leveraged Resources; and
- any completed studies, surveys, Reports, or other work products, if applicable.

The Final Report will cover the entire Grant Period. Additional information may be required as part of the Final Report or requested subsequent to the Final Report for clarity.

### **Final Outcome Data:**

A date for submission of all final Outcome data will be provided in the next edition of this Guide.

**Record Retention:**

Unless otherwise defined in statute or regulation, Grantees will retain and maintain all records and documents relating to the Grant for a minimum period of three (3) years after payment by the Department of the final invoice or provision of a final Report, whichever is later, and will make records available for inspection and audit with prior written notification and during regular working hours. If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records must be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action taken.

**SECTION 12: GRANT ADVISING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Your Partnership has been assigned an EARN Maryland Grant Advisor, who will be available to support your Partnership through the duration of the Grant, answering questions about operational issues as well as providing technical assistance to ensure you meet your Project deliverables and performance outcomes. Each Grantee must assign a Lead Contact Person who is responsible for direct communication with the Grant Advisor and is an agent of the Lead Applicant. Along with the fiscal agent (if different), this individual is responsible for the overall implementation of the Grant and will work with the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor.

The Grant Advisors will also review all Quarterly Reports, including reports prepared by the BEACON evaluation team, to determine if your Project is on track. Site visits may be scheduled to observe training or Partnership meetings and to provide assistance in resolving any challenges that may be impacting your Project. Follow-up with industry and other Partners will also be part of the Grant Advising process.

DLLR strives to be as timely, accurate and customer friendly as possible, while fulfilling its responsibility to ensure that the public funds that have been allocated to the EARN Maryland Program result in measureable outcomes. The following expectations are provided to set the foundation for a productive, collaborative relationship between the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor and the Grantee's Lead Contact Person.

**What Grantees Can Expect From the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor:**

- Availability and responsiveness to questions and concerns
- Sharing of resources and best practices
- Communicating information clearly
- Supporting Partners and Project staff in problem solving
- Creating an environment of trust and support for continuous improvement and innovation

**What the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor Expects from the Grantee:**

- Timely and open communication about the Project's successes and challenges
- Sharing of resources and best practices

- Dedication to achieving and reporting outcomes and progress benchmarks
- Willingness to identify Program design elements that are not effective and making adjustments when needed
- Participation in technical assistance meetings and peer-to-peer networking activities

#### **Technical Assistance:**

DLLR anticipates hosting periodic technical assistance sessions, either in person or via webinar, to facilitate networking, peer-to-peer learning, to share relevant workforce development content and provide overall guidance and support to Grantees, other staff, and Partners.

In addition, the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor will meet regularly with the Grantee Lead Contact Person, and other Program staff and Partners, as appropriate, to assess any specific needs in order to foster the success of each Partnership.

### **SECTION 13: PROJECT MODIFICATIONS**

During the course of the implementation of your Grant, situations may arise that necessitate a change to the Project. Grantees are encouraged to discuss potential changes with their EARN Maryland Grant Advisor prior to submitting a Modification Request. If you have any questions about whether a change to your Project requires a modification, please consult your Grant Advisor. Grantees making unauthorized changes to their Project Activities or Budget risk having disallowable costs that will not be reimbursed. Grant Advisors can also advise Grantees on the appropriate documentation to submit with a Modification Request.

A Project Modification Request is required for any of the following proposed changes:

1. Changes of 20 percent or more to the type or amount of budget line items totaling \$2,500 or more listed in Grantee's Approved Project Budget.
2. Significant changes to the Grant deliverables.
3. Significant changes to enrollment and outcome goals.
4. Significant changes to timelines in the Project Schedule.
5. Significant changes to the type of education or training services provided.
6. Significant changes to the project management model, regardless of changes to the budget.
7. Selection of any Sub-Grantee after the Grant Agreement issue date.

A Project Modification Request must be emailed to, and approved by, the Grant Advisor prior to the effective date of the change. The Request should include a **Modification Request Form**, which your Grant Advisor will provide to you at the time a modification is initiated, and any revised attachments or forms that are affected by the modification.

Your Grant Advisor may also require a Project Modification Request for other changes that constitute a significant revision to the Project or budget.

Once a Grant Advisor approves a Project Modification Request, EARN Maryland will notify Grantee in writing.

## SECTION 14: MONITORING

DLLR is responsible for ensuring that organizations receiving Grant funds:

- a. have the fiscal and Program systems needed to meet all relevant grant reporting requirements;
- b. meet the terms of the Grant Award outlined in the Grant Agreement with DLLR;
- c. provide quality services to Program participants;
- d. expend Grant funds only for allowable activities; and
- e. have all required approvals, licenses, and/or certifications, comply, and are in good standing with all legal and regulatory requirements.

DLLR's EARN Maryland Program staff fulfills these responsibilities in several way, including, but not limited to:

- reviews of Project Schedules and all Quarterly Reports,
- site visits to meet with program staff, Partners & participants,
- on-site fiscal, system and Program monitoring.

### **Reviews of Project Schedules, Quarterly Reports, and Requests for Payment:**

As noted above, the EARN Maryland Grant Advisors will review each Grantee's Project Schedule, Quarterly Reports and Requests for Payment to determine whether:

- a. Grantee's organization is on track with respect to the Program timelines, outcomes, and other deliverables outlined in the Grant Agreement;
- b. data entry is up to date and free of errors;
- c. spending and leveraged resources are on track and are related to the Project Schedule, deliverables and outcomes;
- d. recruitment, assessment and selection processes are designed to support Program goals; and
- e. Strategic Industry Partners, particularly employers, are engaged in the manner they have committed to.

**Program Site Visits:**

At different points in the Project, your EARN Maryland Grant Advisor may request an opportunity to meet with your staff, Partners, or participants. The purpose of these visits is to help the Grant Advisor gain a better understanding of the implementation of the Project and address any concerns or questions that may have arisen during the review of the Reports and related evaluation by the BEACON team. A formal Report will not be issued, but the EARN Maryland Grant Advisor will provide Grantee with feedback and any identified next steps at the end of or immediately following the visit. Timely and effective cooperation with the Grant Advisor is required for continued participation in the EARN Maryland Program.

**Invoice Documentation Review:**

As noted in Section 6, DLLR will periodically request that Grantees submit detailed documentation of expenditures for review by EARN Maryland Program staff and DLLR fiscal specialists.

Failure to maintain and provide the required documentation when requested will result in the following progressive corrective action:

1. Requiring Grantee to submit documentation with all subsequent invoices.
2. Full audit of Grantee's EARN Program.
3. Suspension of Grantee's participation in the EARN Maryland Program and all future disbursements for a period of time determined by DLLR.
4. Termination of the EARN Maryland Grant Agreement and mandatory return of disbursed EARN funds.

**Comprehensive Monitoring and Review:**

DLLR may also conduct an on-site comprehensive monitoring of Grantees' fiscal and operational systems, as well as a comprehensive review of Program delivery, including case management, instruction, support services and job placement.

DLLR will notify Grantees if their Grant is identified for a monitoring review and work with the Grantee to schedule a date(s) for this review. This review includes several components, all of which need not be completed on the same day:

**Fiscal**

1. The monitoring team will review all documents and records related to a sample of invoices and Sub-Grants.
2. If an independent audit or Report from a previous monitoring visit identified any material findings, the monitoring team will review relevant documents and records and interview staff to determine whether your organization has addressed the finding satisfactorily.

### Operational Systems

1. The monitoring team will review the following policies and procedures for compliance with State standards and will interview staff and review a sample of records to test your organization's compliance with them:
  - a. Procurement
  - b. Audit and audit resolution
  - c. Budget controls
  - d. Cash management
  - e. Cost allocation
  - f. Other internal controls

### Program

1. EARN Maryland Program staff will conduct the following activities:
  - a. Observe a class or other instructional activities
  - b. Interview an instructor
  - c. Interview a case manager, where applicable
  - d. Interview a participant
2. At the time of the scheduled monitoring visit, the team will review:
  - a. Case files for a sample of participants pulled from the database
  - b. Sub-Grantee documents
  - c. OJT agreements
  - d. Participant selection policy
  - e. Support services policy
  - f. Stipend policy
  - g. Any other relevant MOU's, policies or agreements

At the end of this process, a report will be communicated to the Grantee on the status of the comprehensive monitoring and review.

### **Annual Report and Financial Audit:**

Each Grantee will have the right to use their certified public accountant(s) to verify their financial statements annually, provided, however, that each Grantee will be responsible for the costs for such audit or review services.

DLLR will review the most recent independent audit, review, or compilation Report for each Grantee annually. You will receive a reminder to submit your audit or review Report in March of each year. You cannot submit a review or compilation if an audit exists, nor can you submit a compilation if a review exists.

In addition to this DLLR review, the DLLR Internal Audit Unit may conduct an annual fiscal compliance audit on the EARN Maryland Program to determine whether EARN Maryland used and monitored Grant funds in accordance with the Grant law or applicable Program guidance. The audit will also evaluate whether Grantees selected by EARN Maryland complied with their Grant Agreements state regulations and policies. Therefore, it is imperative that each Grantee maintain documentation of all applicable records for review and audit.

## SECTION 15: EARN MD CONNECT

Grantees and all Partners in EARN Maryland-funded Partnerships are required to create and maintain an account in the EARN MD CONNECT web portal (accessible at <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/earn/earnconnect.shtml>). Each Partner Organization must create an Organizational Profile, and each Partnership must create a Partnership Profile. All profiles within the portal must be up-to-date, and each Partner must join their Partnership's Partnership Profile within the portal.

In the near future, EARN Maryland staff will communicate with 2014 Implementation Grantees via EARN MD CONNECT, and programmatic and outcome reporting data will be included within CONNECT, both for the overall EARN Maryland Program, and for each individual Partnership. It is, therefore, imperative that all Partners create and maintain accounts within the system.

## SECTION 16: MEDIA & SUCCESS STORIES

### **Media:**

For any press releases, newsletters, promotional flyers or other media to announce or provide information about the EARN Maryland Implementation Grant Program or the activities that Grantees are undertaking in relation to this Grant, the announcement must include information about the source of the funding as follows:

*This Project is funded by the State of Maryland's EARN Maryland Grant Program, administered by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.*

### **Success Stories:**

DLLR encourages Grantees to share with their Grant Advisor any opportunities for press events or releases so that we can partner to share these opportunities with a broader audience. DLLR also encourages Grantees to submit local publicity regarding the EARN

Maryland Grant Program – newspaper stories, newsletter articles, etc. – to their Grant Advisor.

In addition, DLLR receives requests for success stories about participants that have earned employment, employers that have met a business need and other new Programing capacity. In order to be proactive in sharing these stories, DLLR has provided a space in the Quarterly Narrative Report Form for Grantees to provide at least one idea about potential success stories for further development. DLLR will select a few stories to highlight periodically and will follow-up with the applicable Grantees to outline a media strategy.

## SECTION 17: APPENDICES

Appendix A: Project Schedule Form

Appendix B: Project Schedule Guidance

Appendix C: Request for Payment Form

Appendix D: Quarterly Expenditure Report Form & Chart of Required Documentation for  
Expenses and Leveraged Resources

Appendix E: Quarterly Narrative Report Form

Appendix F: Quarterly Outcome Report Form

Forthcoming:

Project Modification Form

Leveraged Resources Tracking Form